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Introduction: Lobbying for Democracy

Eduard van de Bilt

In a book that commemorates the bicentennial of the American constitution, historian Michael Kammen argues that the history of the document establishing the American political system is characterized by fierce debates and quarrels.¹ In the years between 1787, when the text was written, and 1986, when Kammen's study was published, a consensus about the meaning of the political document was usually absent. Kammen's depiction of two centuries of constitutional disagreements fits into a more general appraisal of the American political tradition that disposes of pieties surrounding the constitution often expressed by citizens and scholars alike. Far from being an elegantly balanced system of checks and balances that offers all political players their fair share, the constitution helped bring about a democracy that, institutionally and otherwise, is a veritable struggle for survival. It forces its participants to remain ever vigilant and organized, prepared to defend their position and perspective, aware that the moment they fail to fight for their rights and interests, others will use the opportunity to their own advantage. As a result, participants are forced to make sure that their voices are heard in government circles: efforts to gain access to government officials and politicians become an inherent part of the system. Lobbying to gain that access is turned into a political necessity.

Covering moments and movements in American political history ranging from the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in the 1960s to evangelicals in the Reagan era and African-American New Yorkers concerned about the burial site of their ancestors in the 1990s, the following essays show how Americans struggled to get their convictions and interests registered and realized by organizing and expressing their perspective in the public domain of politics and seeking out politicians for support. They show how various participants in American democracy added to the remarkable phenomenon that French visitor Alexis de Tocqueville noted when traveling in the United States in the 1830s: the abundant presence of associations lobbying to influence public opinion and government decisions.²

¹ M. Kammen, *A Machine that Would Go of Itself: The Constitution in American Culture* (New York 1986).

² A. de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1835; 1840) trans. by G. Bevan (London and New York 2003).

In its most crude and materialist form, however, this self-help tradition in American democracy has a bad reputation. It is usually described in terms of the material interests groups and their lobbyists scheming to use the public domain for private purposes. Lobbying for access to government circles in this sense is what undermines democracy. The recent 2010 Supreme Court decision in the *Citizens United* case, in which a majority of the judges allowed private companies and labor unions (with very few restrictions) to spend freely on political campaigns, only reinforced the impression, common among many commentators of the American political scene, that money and material interest groups secretly influencing officials and politicians have hijacked American democracy and should serve as a warning for the dangers besetting democracy more generally. It can come as no surprise that those citizens who try to improve the quality of American politics aim to regulate and contain the behavior of lobbyists in particular.

As the essays in this volume of *Leidschrift* indicate, these efforts raise important issues. If American democracy entails an incessant struggle to be taken notice of, lobbying and its history transcend and complicate the story of private companies dictating government policies and robber barons buying political influence during election time. If lobbies are like the factions that James Madison depicts in his 'Federalist No. 10' (his most famous contribution to the debate about the American constitution that he helped write), that is to say a necessary evil without which liberty cannot exist, lobbying takes on a different hue.³ Although the need to distinguish between types of lobbies and degrees of their activities' openness remains relevant, what is one to make of lobbying when it no longer contradicts democracy but is at the heart of it?

Defined as the often secret, unwarranted influence exerted on political power brokers and government officials by agents representing specific material interest groups, lobbying activities are an at once oddly straightforward and broad phenomenon. According to this definition, which emphasizes the negative features involved in lobbying, it privileges a few at the cost of the many. Lobbyists representing private interests undermine the public good; their illicit access to people in power thwarts the democratic process. As its historians and opponents would argue, this

³ J. Madison, 'The Federalist No. 10' (1787) in: J. Madison, *Writings* (New York 1999).

lobbying for private material gain has a long history, as old as American politics itself. Lobbies and their opponents quarreled from the moment George Washington began governing the country under the new constitution in 1789. One of the complaints that Thomas Jefferson and James Madison lodged against the policies of Washington's Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton in the 1790s was exactly that he only took the financial interests of New York City's burgeoning bankers and their supporters to heart.⁴ Andrew Jackson, president from 1829 until 1837, continued Jefferson's crusade against what he deemed Wall Street's moneyed interests, fueling a populist tradition that in its efforts to uphold the myth that American democracy was characterized by 'equal rights for all and privileges for none' continually saw and attacked special interest groups corrupting the ideal.⁵

At the end of the twentieth century, *Washington Post* journalist William Greider relied on this populist complaint in his *Secrets of the Temple*, in which he portrayed Jackson-like how Wall Street was running the Federal Reserve system and the United States' economy, and in his *Who Will Tell the People*, a lament about the ways in which private companies abuse the political procedures in Congress for their own purposes.⁶ As Greider's second book shows, even after legislative proposals had passed Congress and been turned into laws, corporate interests managed to block or dramatically undercut the practical implementation of these legislative efforts by making sure that the rules were rewritten to their own advantage in the regulatory agencies overlooking the process. The very industrial moguls often idealized as key players in American economic developments are also often attacked as robber barons because of the undue influence they exert(ed) over the political process in the United States. While idolized as role models, the Rockefellers, Morgans and Adelmans of their time are also criticized for corrupting politics due to the anti-democratic, influence-buying practices

⁴ S. Elkins and E. McKittrick, *The Age of Federalism: The Early American Republic, 1788-1800* (New York and Oxford) particularly chapter II, 'Finance and Ideology', 77-131.

⁵ Herbert Croly uses the phrase in his *The Promise of American Life* (1909; Boston 1989) 150.

⁶ W. Greider, *Secrets of the Temple: How the Federal Reserve Runs the Country* (New York 1987) and *Who Will Tell the People: The Betrayal of American Democracy* (New York and London 1992).

and organizations they use(d) to make sure their needs are heeded.⁷ Their lobbying efforts are seen as a threat, undermining the quality of American democracy.

A substantive part of American political history accordingly consists of the rather unsuccessful efforts to limit and suppress this type of lobbying or channel it to such an extent that it no longer endangers democratic procedures. The first truly professional political party system established in the 1820s by politicians such as Martin van Buren (who created the current Democratic Party) and many of Tocqueville's associations for instance aimed to regulate and control interest group politics, but hardly did so. Far from ending the access of special interests and their agents to government officials and politicians, they continued it; instead of solving the problem of unwarranted lobbying efforts, the political parties and associations became part of it. They helped divide the country into interest groups that defended their often rather material interests by trying to exert undue political influence. By fueling the proliferation of interest groups they made lobbying only slightly more democratic: hardly mitigating its worst aspects and far from abolishing it, they opened up lobbying to many more groups than in Hamilton's days. Even though many groups became involved in lobbying efforts, it remained clear that a few Americans were always able to 'buy' more easy access to power brokers than others.

Occasionally, opponents of lobbying succeeded in scoring a few important but usually temporary victories. The influence of moneyed interests on elections has always been deemed the most blatant abuse of the political system linked to lobbying efforts. Even before the Watergate scandal revealed how President Richard Nixon had relied on unlimited private donations for his 1972 reelection campaign, the need to regulate political campaign financing and limit the privileged access of special interest groups to the White House and Congress was obvious to many. Responding to worries about the influence of private interests on politics in the decades after the Civil War and, more particularly the election of 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt suggested limiting corporate contributions to the political process in 1905, beginning a movement that in its current-day reform efforts was reignited in 1971, when Congress adopted the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA). The act tried to limit the flow of often private money into for instance presidential and Congressional election

⁷ Ken Adelman and his family are among the current-day financial backers of Republican candidates and causes.

campaigns and set aside public money to run the presidential election process. Before the law went into effect in 1972, Nixon used the opportunity to collect millions of private donations (often in cash) to enhance his chances of reelection. A recent *Washington Post* article about the 1972 events describes how

money poured into Richard Nixon's reelection campaign from all corners; Six-figure checks flown by corporate jets from Texas; bundles of payments handed over at an Illinois game preserve; a battered brown attaché case stuffed with \$ 200,000 in cash from a New Jersey investor, hoping to fend off a fraud investigation.

As the article continues:

During four pivotal weeks in spring 1972, the president brought in as much as \$ 20 million – about \$110 million in today's dollars – much of it in the form of illegal corporate donations and all of it raised to avoid disclosure rules that went into effect in that April.⁸

When all this became public, Congress came up with new, stricter rules in 1974, and established the Federal Election Commission (FEC) to administer the election process. Congress passed a series of rules stipulating how much money individuals could contribute to election campaigns and political causes more generally, beginning the recent history of campaign finance reform in which its supporters and opponents (the latter often including Congressional members) are continually engaged in a struggle to define and impose, and explore and expand the rules. Congress also established a presidential election system that limited the amount of money that presidential contenders who accept public financing for their campaigns can spend during the primaries and during the fall election stage.⁹

Moreover, partly because of Nixon's embrace of corporate money, new organizations arose that made the proper nature of the election process, that is to say efforts to curb the unjustified access to government circles by special corporate interests, their main issue. In 1970, for instance, Common

⁸ D. Eggen, 'Post-Watergate Campaign Finance Limits Undercut by Changes', *The Washington Post*, June 17, 2012.

⁹ Barack Obama was the first presidential candidate who decided to opt out of this system in 2008, well aware that he could raise more money on the basis of private contributions than the public system would allow him to spend.

Cause was established. Originally created by a Republican politician involved in demonstrations against the Vietnam War, Common Cause aims to improve the quality of American democracy by focusing on its blemishes. As its website states, Common Cause

is a nonpartisan, nonprofit advocacy organization founded in 1970 by John Gardner as a vehicle for citizens to make their voices heard in the political process and to hold their elected leaders accountable to the public interest.¹⁰

It wants to return politics to the public by restoring the ‘good government’ tradition that was part of earlier reform movements in American political history such as the Progressive Era (broadly the years of the Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson presidencies), aiming to professionalize and democratize politics by taking it out of the hands of a select and limited number of particularly corporate interest groups and allowing every citizen equal access to government institutions and representatives. Common Cause helped change campaign finance rules on the federal and state levels, and stood at the origin of innovations such as the Freedom of Information Act (originally enacted under President Lyndon B Johnson but expanded under President Gerald Ford in 1974 due to the Watergate scandal), which forced the United States government to ensure ‘public access to U.S. government records.’¹¹

Common Cause is part of a far larger history of similar organizations that includes its early-twentieth-century predecessor the Citizens Union and institutions such as the American Civil Liberties Union, created in 1920 to protect Americans’ civil rights, and Public Citizen. As its website states,

Public Citizen serves as the people’s voice in the nation’s capital. Since our founding in 1971, we have delved into an array of areas, but our work on each issue shares an overarching goal: To ensure that all citizens are represented in the halls of power.

The motto that the organization uses says: ‘Corporations have their lobbyists in Washington, D.C. The people need advocates too.’¹² All of

¹⁰ *Common Cause*, ‘About Us’, <http://www.commoncause.org/>.

¹¹ *The National Security Archive*, ‘The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)’, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/foia.html>.

¹² *Public Citizen*, ‘About Public Citizen’: <http://www.citizen.org/>.

these public interest organizations are not just part of a good government tradition but also of what French scholar Pierre Rosanvallon has called 'counter-democracy': public attempts to improve the quality of democratic politics that can be said to enhance democratic legitimacy from the bottom up by resorting to a tradition of distrust.¹³

Public concerns are what differentiate this type of organizations from, say, the National Rifle Association, which defends the citizen's right to carry arms, and special interest groups such as corporations: they claim to defend the public cause instead of specific interests. As the names reveal, Common Cause and others like it try to limit what can be called a privatization of politics. Though embracing the free market system, they aim to uphold the government's impartial, regulatory role and the quality of the public domain. To a certain extent they subscribe to the old, eighteenth-century republican (or civic-humanist) tradition that Barack Obama also approves of: considering the public interest to be more important than the private, they worry about the intrusion of the private into the public.¹⁴

In a recent *New York Times* article about the New Jersey prison system, the newspaper reported about halfway house facilities created to prepare prisoners for re-entry in society.¹⁵ The article details the defects of the institutions managed, in this case, by private companies: the lack of oversight, the number of escapees who commit new crimes, the odd links between the state's governor, Chris Christy, other New Jersey politicians, and the owners of the company running the halfway houses. The article is not only a complaint about these poorly run private organizations but also brings into the open the behind-the-scenes contacts between private investors and public officials that usually bring about these organizations and deals. Privatizing politics in certain ways is what Common Cause opposes. Even if not necessarily against the presence of market forces in public affairs, Common Cause assesses private contributions to the public

¹³ P. Rosanvallon, *Counter-Democracy: Politics in an Age of Distrust*, trans. by A. Goldhammer (Cambridge, U.K. 2008) 'Introduction'.

¹⁴ Bernard Bailyn's *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass. 1967) is one of the standard works on the republican or civic humanist tradition. J. T. Kloppenberg, *Reading Obama: Dreams, Hope, and the American Political Tradition* (Princeton 2011) discusses Obama against the backdrop of the republican paradigm; see particularly 43-44, 101-102.

¹⁵ S. Dolnick, 'Unlocked. Inside New Jersey's Halfway Houses: As Escapees Stream Out, A Penal Business Thrives', *The New York Times*, 16 June, 2012.

domain on the basis of their public value; moreover, it wants agreements about these contributions to be the result of open, transparent, that is to say public deliberations.

Yet while the goals of public interest organizations such as Common Cause differ from the ones whose influence they try to expose and limit, they are oddly linked to the very groups they oppose. Although these organizations correctly claim to differ from 'regular' special interest lobby groups in that they aim for transparency and fairness in the political process, the methods on which organizations such as Common Cause rely are not completely different from the features ascribed to regular lobbyists. Common Cause too hopes to influence the government; its representatives try to persuade politicians to support its crusade, most probably also seeking them out in the effort. Even though it claims to represent the public good and characterizes its work as advocacy more than lobbying, it 'lobbies' government agencies and Congress to achieve its aims. Public Citizen's website mentions that it 'has two offices in Washington, D.C., and one in Austin, Texas.'¹⁶ Ironically, forcing politicians and the government to be the agent of more than a happy few, organizations such as Common Cause and Public Citizen try to restrict – or perhaps even end – all lobbying by embracing strategies at least partly copied from their opponents: though trying to push the government to embrace the public cause, they are engaged in what can well be considered as lobbying. Can lobbying still be denounced as a threat to democracy if even those opposing lobbying rely on its very means: what does it say that even the opponents of lobbying have to resort to lobbying to achieve their aims?

While Common Cause differentiates its lobbying efforts from the attempts to influence government officials instigated by representatives of other, more privately oriented lobby organizations by claiming to fight for all Americans, such claims are difficult to sustain in so large a democracy as the American. The 'public good' is notoriously difficult to define – as is the claim of 'undue influence' leveled at lobbyists. If even those who complain about the undue influence exerted by special interest groups over government policies are forced to organize and lobby, are lobbies and lobbying all we have, resembling the factions that James Madison bewailed yet could not do without? Indeed, Madison acknowledged that it would be

¹⁶ *Public Citizen*, 'About Public Citizen'.

foolish to try and abolish them. He explained why on the basis of a comparison involving the relationship between air and fire:

Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be a less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.¹⁷

While access to government circles is what everyone wants and is entitled to in a democracy, no one automatically gets the politicians' ear. To expedite this access some form of 'lobbying' is necessary, as even the opponents of lobbying show. A voice has to be heard and registered before politicians and officials are even willing to listen; it makes sense to get organized for the purpose, increasing the number of people sharing one's political desires, and advance this process through lobbying. In the democratic efforts to gain access to government circles lobbying is a necessary, almost inherent aspect of the political process, particularly given the number of interests making up a society. Interest groups will vary depending on the scope of their concerns: whereas some have a rather restricted clientele, others pretend to represent an issue of public wellbeing – many of them will actually pretend to be part of the latter category. Regardless of the more or less restricted nature of the interest group involved, everyone tries to gain access to politicians in the effort to sway them and realize specific desires. In a democracy, everyone is a closet lobbyist.

Inez Schippers' contribution shows how Christian groups in the United States were provoked to lobby in favor of their religious tradition when their convictions and values were apparently no longer adhered to in the public domain. As Johanna Kardux' essay on the African-American burial ground in New York City shows, without the support of various African American politicians in the city, state, and national governments whose assistance was sought by protestors concerned about their African-American ancestors' remains not much would have happened. The differences between lobbying to promote rather material private interests and advocating public policies are not always clear. Many efforts at gaining influence can be considered, and involve, lobbying.

¹⁷ J. Madison, 'The Federalist No. 10', 161.

Government agencies also lobby government agencies. But, as Mark Miller's article indicates, the weapon of lobbying assumes a different shape in the hands of the president of the United States, who, trying to enhance his political impact, will do his utmost to prevent the Supreme Court from blocking his political agenda; he will for instance 'lobby' to get his nominees for the court appointed. Political parties can 'lobby' the moment they find that the voices and visions they stand for are ignored. More importantly, they will do so openly, via the press and other means. Sabrina Otterloo's contribution narrates how after the American Civil War Louisiana Democrats engaged in a campaign intended to sway white voters of the need to purge Louisiana politics of African-Americans. Though on the one hand the opposite of lobbying in its blatant negation of the behind-the-scenes strategies of 'persuasion' that characterize the phenomenon, the violence on which the Democratic party in the state relied can on the other hand be described, to paraphrase William James, as the immoral equivalent of lobbying, that is to say its most brazen form.¹⁸

One of the intriguing questions that Mark de Vries' essay about the neoconservative intellectuals who transformed the Republican Party under presidents Reagan and George H. W. and George W. Bush raises, is to what extent intellectuals writing public opinion pieces are engaged in a lobbying effort that is not immediately recognized as such because of its public and open nature. In this respect, government itself is the site of lobbying in more than one respect. Far from representing a blank sheet, or neutral space, upon which lobbyists try to impose or imprint their desires, government is the result of lobbying efforts; moreover, it not only continually undergoes but also exerts efforts to shape official policies. While even a narrow reading of lobbying shows it to be an all-pervasive tool difficult to distinguish from other stratagems of political persuasion, in its expansive definition all democratic government is lobbying.

Consequently, as scholars of lobbying indicate, efforts to curb the activities of lobbyists have to be addressed carefully because they may strike at democracy's heart. Constitutional scholars will point out that what one could call the right to lobby is guaranteed by the first amendment of the American constitution, which refers not only to the freedom of religion and press but also the right to petition government: in a perhaps rather broad interpretation of the text of the constitution, scholars associate this right

¹⁸ W. James, 'The Moral Equivalent of War' (1910) in: W. James, *Writings 1902-1910* (New York 1987) 1281-1293.

with lobbying.¹⁹ Organizations such as Common Cause that helped enact a series of regulations covering the activities of lobbyists have to tread carefully. The Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 forces lobbyists for trade groups to register. Later amendments refined the rules even further, influencing the position of those sought out by lobbyists. Nowadays, members of Congress are forced to make public the gifts they receive and the trips they make, detailing the purpose of travel and how it is financed. In a somewhat similar but less formal vein, websites such as Opensecrets.org keep track of the amount of money lobbyists spend and the number of former lobbyists working in Congress. Efforts to make sure that after the Citizens United decision by the Supreme Court in 2010 the public gets to know who sponsors the political campaign advertisements financed by the so-called 'super Pacs' (political action committees) and other related organizations not required by law to divulge the names of their contributors are part of the same movement to expose the work of lobbying and influence peddling. The court's Citizens United decision undermined the McCain-Feingold Act of 2002, which updated the 1972 FECA, in that it allowed corporations and labor unions to spend unlimited amounts of money on political causes and election campaigns, provided this spending was not directly related to the campaign of specific political candidates. But the new rules do not prevent members of Congress from becoming lobbyists after their years in the House and Senate, or lobbyists from becoming their staff members because such regulations would impinge on individual liberties. Far from halting the amount of lobbying, the 1995 act aimed to regulate the process. It simply ensured that the status and behavior of the approximately 12,000 lobbyists who are active in Washington, D.C., have to meet official requirements.

Opponents of this type of regulation can rest assured: its effects are small. Even Common Cause's efforts to undo lobbying by undermining one of its main pillars, secrecy, have met with limited success. Legislation such as the Lobbying Act intends to bring into the open what lobbyists try to hide from view, robbing them of one of their most potent weapons: the hidden nature of their activities. The idea behind campaigns that aim to bring lobbying into the open is that openness will undo the lobbyists'

¹⁹ The text of the amendment reads: 'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.'

influence: interestingly, whereas in the debate about a thriving public domain there is a solid group of thinkers who believe that face-to-face meetings are essential to bring about a healthy public sphere, in the debate about lobbying these very same face-to-face meetings are considered the heart of the problem. It is questionable, however, if this openness can be achieved and has the desired effect. In the White House all presidential visitors are registered upon entry; should members of Congress be forced to list all the people they meet? More importantly, the open nature of public-minded lobbyists' efforts and the desire for fairness do not automatically turn institutions such as Common Cause into non-lobbying organizations. Even those 'lobbyists' whose major strength consists of their access to publicity and the open nature of their efforts cannot fully transcend the problematic features of lobbying.

If openness about contacts undermines the illicit nature of lobbying, intellectuals are the ideal lobbyists. But as Mark de Vries's essay shows, this idyllic picture of intellectual lobbyists only partly holds. While the neo-conservative redefinition of American foreign policy that helped bring about a conservative, Republican take-over in American politics may have occurred quite openly, this public, 'rational' lobbying effort in favor of Republican policies and politicians was part of a far more insidious and secret revolution that made a mockery of democracy: the intellectuals' openness, their publicity and purportedly civic contribution to public discussions, did not fit into the tradition of the public sphere glorified by the likes of German philosopher Jürgen Habermas – a sphere grounded in open, rational debate – but served mainly to re-establish the kind of secret access to government and administration officials that organizations such as Common Cause aimed to question and eliminate.²⁰

When even openness does not necessarily undo lobbyists' efforts, opponents of lobbying are hardly helpless, however. They can resort to similar tactics, trying to influence public opinion with public statements making their case. Moreover, they will simply have to step up the hard work of unmasking lobbying by exposing the links between government officials and politicians on the one hand and lobbyists on the other in an approach

²⁰ Jürgen Habermas is credited with reigniting the debate about the public sphere in for instance the United States due to the English translation of his early work on the subject titled *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass. 1989). Ideally the sphere is characterized by rational public debate.

of relentless distrust that is at once conducive to, and essential for, democracy and damaging in its disclosures.

Lobbying is thus an inherent part of American politics, in which even the most public-minded citizens have to engage if they wish to succeed in blocking their opponents' privileged position. Everyone has to 'lobby' to make sure that no political perspective is disregarded. As the following essays indicate, lobbying takes on different hues, depending on the cause it represents and the parties involved. Even though most groups engaged in defending their special interests claim the mantle of 'public interest', it is relatively easy to distinguish the most blatant forms of private interest lobbying from the campaigns of organizations such as Common Cause. To reveal these lobbying efforts will not automatically stop them, however. As many political commentators would add, stopping these efforts is not even necessary. Lobbying is as much part of democratic politics as the power struggles between different branches of government and the rivalries of other political players and institutions. While clamoring for openness, even those who lobby to end all lobbying will use special channels of access to ensure the success of their efforts. Lobbying is simply one of the professional aspects of doing American politics.

While the least democratic lobbying campaigns occur in the dark (their representatives well aware that their desires are 'special' and not exactly representative of the public good), the most democratic appear in the open, simply claiming a seat at the negotiating table in a play of interest groups politics that will give each player his or her due. As Laura Maessen's contribution to this issue of *Leidschrift* shows, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party that challenged the Mississippi Democratic Party's delegate selection for the 1964 Democratic presidential convention is a prime example of this kind of lobbying. Excluded from the election process by the racist and segregationist forces in Mississippi politics, the representatives of the movement fought hard to democratize politics by turning at least the Democratic Party's presidential election process into a fair deal. That their efforts to open up the procedures involved among other things intricate behind-the-scenes maneuvering indicates how convoluted even the most lofty campaigns for a more participatory democracy are.

Many citizens lobby, either to protect their material interests or to preserve their heritage and ensure the introduction of their religious convictions into

the political domain. Many of them resort to publicity to prove how rational and reasonable their claims are. And if even the most Protestant Americans are engaged in lobbying efforts to have their voices heard and convictions registered, perhaps the distrust of lobbying that is so pervasive in circles claiming to represent the public good has to be re-evaluated. Without these influence-peddling efforts political voices remain mute and desires unfulfilled; without the attempts to get government officials and politicians to listen to one's demands, there is no democracy. Paradoxically, only lobbying can undo lobbying. Like James Madison's factions, which enable and divide politics, lobbying is a two-edged sword, at once a curse and a blessing. While the distrust aimed at lobbying and the suspicion that some may have better access to government officials and politicians than others represent a healthy attitude conducive to democracy, they also fuel the phenomenon they try to undermine.